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MOSCOW TESTING COMMON MARKET ON A POSSIBLE TIE

Has Made Tentative Inquiry
on Trade Bloc Operations
in Talks to Diplomats

GENEVA HEARS RUMORS

Speculation Is Growing That
Soviet Soon Will Open
Mission in Brussels

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GENEVA, May 5—The Soviet Union, which in the past has denounced the European Common Market as an expression of "monopoly capitalism," is believed to be getting ready to adjust its relations with the six-nation economic organization.

The Russians, according to reliable sources, have started to put out feelers, still tentative, about establishing relations with the Common Market, or, as it is officially known, the European Economic Community.

The speculation among Western diplomats is that the Russians in the not-distant future will accredit a mission to the Brussels headquarters of the economic community, as capitalist industrial countries already have.

The Russian interest appears to be an application of the maxim: If you can't lick them, join them.

Bloc Denounced Earlier

When the European Economic Community came into existence, the Russians denounced it as an adjunct of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or as an expression of "monopoly capitalism," an old Communist bogey. They said it would make the rich of Western Europe richer at the expense of the workers.

It hasn't worked out that way. Europe's rich have been getting richer but so have the workers and most everyone else in the Common Market countries — West Germany, Italy, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

The speculation that the Russians might be interested in establishing relations with the community has been spurred by the recent behavior of Soviet diplomats in European capitals. They have been asking their Western colleagues just how the missions in Brussels work and what advantages accrue from being represented there.

This is not the kind of small talk Soviet diplomats engage

in merely to make conversation and pass the time at cocktail parties. The westerners questioned assume that Moscow is giving active consideration to the timing of a move to Brussels.

By Jan. 1, 1970, at the latest, the Brussels-based Executive Commission of the Common Market will have implemented plans toward economic integration of the market's six members. If the Russians want to continue trading with what, next to the United States, is the richest trade bloc in the world, they will have to negotiate with the Common Market.

The Soviet is expected to have established formal relations with the trade bloc well before this date, and to have opened the way for other members of the Soviet bloc to do the same. Poland and Hungary have, in fact, already indicated their readiness to talk trade with the Common Market.

The prospect of the Soviet bloc members seeking accreditation to the Common Market's Executive Commission has already turned up a knotty political problem within the Brussels organization.

West Germany is inclined to oppose the accreditation of any country that recognizes Communist East Germany except the Soviet Union. The Bonn Government has trade relations with all members of the Soviet bloc, including East Germany, but it does not want East Germany sliding into relations with international organizations, such as the Common Market.

Soviet Is Exception

This, in Bonn's view, would enhance the East Germans' international status and might encourage others to establish diplomatic relations with East Germany. Bonn's doctrine is to refuse diplomatic relations with any country except the Soviet Union that maintains a diplomatic mission to East Germany. The Soviet is expected because it was an occupying power in Germany after World War II.

In trying to adjust her trading with the capitalist West,

Poland has gone a step ahead of the other Soviet bloc countries by applying to participate in the Kennedy round of tariff negotiations now under way.

The Kennedy round envisages tariff cuts of as much as 50 per cent "across the board" among the participating countries. The Polish request has run into opposition from a number of Western European countries and particularly Britain.

The British, who trade extensively with Poland, argue that a Communist-operated economy cannot match the concessions non-Communist countries would be offering in the Kennedy round. The British want to continue the present bilateral arrangements until, they say, this problem can be worked out.

The more sceptical among the economic experts in Geneva for the Kennedy round negotiations say Britain and the others think there is more in it for them under the present system. The United States has favored Polish participation, apparently on the ground that it eventually might lessen Polish dependence on the Soviet Union.

But there are those who say the American position stems from the fact that the United States has little to lose since it does so little business with Poland and the rest of Eastern Europe.